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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 003153

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/SE, NEA/NGA, PMAT; OSD FOR ISA AND ISP; JCS
FOR J5; EUCOM FOR J5, POLAD; CENTCOM FOR J5 AND POLAD;

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/13/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#), [MARR](#), [MOBS](#), [TU](#), [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH MFA DELEGATION VISIT TO IRAQ: ITS IN OUR
INTEREST TO SUPPORT IT

REF: ANKARA 3078

(U) Classified by Acting DCM Scot Marciel. Reasons: 1.5 (B
and D).

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. See para 3.

[1](#)2. (C) Reftel reported the MFA's intention to send a three-person delegation to Iraq beginning May 15. The visit is in large part in response to past invitations from the KDP and PUK for a senior GOT delegation to visit northern Iraq. The Turks' overriding objective is to try to resolve some of the outstanding issues and to improve relations. We understand the KDP and PUK support this visit, and that KDP leader Barzani and PUK leader Talabani (both of whom are in Baghdad) have agreed to meet with the delegation in Baghdad. During a May 13 meeting with the Ambassador (septel), MFA U/S Ziyal requested the Ambassador's assistance in facilitating the visit, including arranging meetings with SPE Bremer and ORHA's Garner and Moore.

[1](#)3. (C) Action request: The USG has for years been a steadfast and vocal supporter of improved Turkish-Kurdish relations. We recognize that conditions on the ground have changed. What has not changed is the tension between Turks and Kurds and the impact these tensions could have on larger US objectives in Iraq. USG support for this visit also furthers our commitment to transparency and information-sharing with Ankara on issues of concern to Turkey. The more the Turks see for themselves the positive developments that have taken place in Iraq since the end of combat operations -- and the extent to which USG officials on the ground can help shape their exposure through meetings -- the better able we will be to manage Turkey's future behavior vis-a-vis Iraq. US failure to facilitate the visit -- including opposition to the delegation's travel -- will be widely interpreted here as evidence that we are not interested in transparency with Ankara and will fuel Turkish perceptions that we have something to hide in northern Iraq. We therefore recommend that Washington agencies endorse the GOT's request to visit Iraq and facilitate the visit, including arranging USG meetings with the delegation in Iraq.
PEARSON